

Abstract

Diploma thesis “Diffusion of innovations in medical setting: A Meta-analysis of case studies” deals with contemporary shape of empirical diffusion research in public health and medical sociology field. By means of meta-analysis based on 23 case studies that was targeted on chosen aspects of investigation within the diffusion of innovations topic, on whole design of the research and on particular methodological procedures we arrived to wide thematic scope of these studies and their significant heterogeneity regarding methodological aspects. This fact testifies the large amount of possibilities that diffusion studies provide, even in such narrowed research area. Meta-analytical findings and studies divided into several typologies were then compared with an older study, where a pragmatic orientation of newer studies on a specific aspect of the whole process and practical task that needs to be solved, turned up. The sociological micro-theories making is then overshadowed by dealing with the actual field problems acute even more in the field of medicine. The communication processes at the level of interpersonal communication (that are, according to the generally accepted definition of diffusion of innovation, principal for the diffusive mechanism) as a dominant object of examination almost faded out. Most of the studies from the sample then perceive the aspect of communication as all the circumstances and factors affecting the diffusion process. The findings of this thesis are thus in contrast with the assumption of similar themes and approach within sole subdiscipline of communication research realized in medical setting, as well as with the general definition and theory of diffusion of innovations. This work then emphasizes the gap in theoretical knowledge of thematic orientations and methods of diffusion research that substantially influence overall understanding of this concept. Further analyses of this sort in other fields as well as the interdisciplinary ones could help to redefine the concept with respect to the new findings.